



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL VI
AGRICULTURE
Organization of markets in crop products
Director

Brussels, 22 December 1997
LH/do D(97) 112

Mr Alex Thiermann
Counsellor
US mission to the EU
Bd du Régent 40, Bte 3
1000 Bruxelles

Subject: US/EC veterinary agreement - EC animal health status - US proposed ruling

Dear Alex.

I am writing to you as a follow-up to the USDA/APHIS mission to the EC 8-16 December 1997, with the wrap-up meeting 17 December. From the Commission side I would like to thank the team for the good collaboration, and I hope that APHIS has now obtained the necessary information in regard to the manner in which the Community policy to regionalization is applied in practice. I understand that the mission has focussed in particular on the situation as regards Classical Swine Fever, having in this connection also received some information on other diseases. I understand you have all the information on Classical Swine Fever, which will allow you to reassess the EC animal health status (EC, its Member States and its regions) for this disease. Obviously we are at your disposal for further information and clarification if so requested. I want to assure you that we want to make this exercise as successful as possible.

As we discussed after the meeting 17.12.97, I would like to provide you with information on other relevant list A diseases referred to in Annex III of the veterinary agreement, which either were not targeted during the mission and/or which have been dealt with in an incomplete manner in your proposed rule of 14.11.97. I am therefore providing you with information on the following diseases in order to give as complete a picture as possible (photograph) of the EC animal health status, its Member States and regions: Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), African Swine Fever, Swine Vesicular Disease (SVD), Newcastle Disease (ND), Avian Influenza (AVI).

- A map on each of these diseases for the EC as a whole indicating the current state of affairs - which regions are affected
- A blow-up of the regions affected in each Member States
- Information on outbreaks in 1996 and 1997

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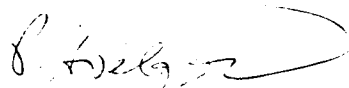
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- Relevant legislation under which regionalization is applied either in the form of the basic directives or separate safeguard decisions by the Commission.

As regards Greece, you will see that there has not been an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease since September 1996, so clearly Greece must be considered as free. For your benefit, however, we have included the map for 1996. I understood that you thought it might be necessary to undertake a separate mission to Greece to verify the situation. If this is the case, I would invite you to contemplate such a mission as soon as possible in order to incorporate the status of Greece with regard to FMD in the rule that APHIS will be publishing in the near future.

It is clearly the Commission's objective that APHIS should publish a rule which describes as accurately as possible the animal health situation in the EC at the moment of the publication of the rule and in the way the Commission defines the situation. It is obvious that a rule, which deviates in any significant manner from what we would legitimately expect, would make it very difficult to explain to the Member States and serve to complicate matters further in terms of arriving at our common objective of getting the veterinary agreement approved.

Yours sincerely,


L. HOELGAARD

Copy: MM. Legras, Heine, Roberts, Schuller, Wilson, Westergaard,
Laddomada, M. Hudson
Mr Pirzio-Biroli, Mrs Kaul, Cabinet Fischler

TABLE 1

Outbreaks of African Swine Fever, Classical Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth Disease and Swine Vesicular Disease recorded in livestock by Member States of the EU in 1996 and 1997

MEMBER STATE	African Swine Fever 96/97* (Last outb.)	Classical Swine Fever (Last outb.) 96/97* (Last outb.)	Foot and Mouth Disease (Last outbr) 96/97*	Swine Vesicular Disease 96/97* (Last outbr)
Austria	0/0	(10/7) 2/0	0/0	0/0
Belgium	0/0	0/8 (10/7)	0/0	0/0
Denmark	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Finland	0/0	0/0	0/	0/0
France	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Germany	0/0	4/46 (15/7)	0/0	0/0
Greece	0/0	0/0	(30/9) 39/0	0/0
Spain	0/0	0/73 (21/11)	0/0	0/0
Ireland	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Italy	65**/20** (21/10)	49/52 (21/11)	0/0	4/16 (24/7)
Luxembourg	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Netherland	0/0	0/424 (25/11)	0/0	0/0
Portugal	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
Sweden	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
United Kingdom	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0
TOTAL	65/20	55/603	39/0	4/16

* By 15 December 1997 (A.D.N.S.)

** At the Island of Sardinia

TABLE 2
Outbreaks of Avian Influenza and Newcastle disease recorded in poultry by
Member States of the EU in 1996 and 1997

MEMBER STATE	Avian Influenza 96/97* (Last outbr)	Newcastle disease 96/97* (Last outbr)
Austria	0/0	4/1 (5/11)
Belgium	0/0	7/2 (10/10)
Denmark	0/0	4/0
Finland	0/0	2/0
France	0/0	0/1 (18/9)
Germany	0/0	2/0
Greece	0/0	0/0
Spain	0/0	0/0
Ireland	0/0	0/1 (4/4)
Italy	0/5 (28/11)	4/2 (15/10)
Luxembourg	0/0	0/0
Netherland	0/0	2/1 (19/8)
Portugal	0/0	3/10 (8/8)
Sweden	0/0	0/1 (4/11)
United Kingdom	0/0	2/38 (19/8)
TOTAL	0/5	30/57

* By 15 December 1997 (A.D.N.S.)



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE
VETERINARY LEGISLATION UNIT

INFORMATION

ON

THE ANIMAL HEALTH SITUATION

IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

* * *

- 1. Disease situation**
- 2. Disease control measures**

December 1997

INFORMATION ON THE ANIMAL HEALTH SITUATION IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

This note has been drawn up with the objective to elucidate the animal health situation in the EU with regard to African Swine Fever (ASF), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Swine Vesicular Disease (SVD), Avian Influenza (AI) and Newcastle Disease (ND). Maps are provided to give a picture (photograph) of the situation in 1997 and tables provide information on outbreaks recorded during 1996 and 1997. To explain the measures applied to the control and eradication of OIE List A diseases the relevant EC legislation is briefly described and listed.

1. DISEASE SITUATION

The maps showing the disease situation in livestock and poultry in 1997 are as follows:

1. African Swine Fever (ASF), EC
2. ASF - Italy
3. Classical Swine Fever (CSF), EC
4. CSF - Belgium
5. CSF - Germany
6. CSF - Italy
7. CSF - Spain
8. CSF - The Netherlands
9. Classical Swine Fever in wild boar, EC
10. Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), 1996, EC
11. FMD, Greece 1996
12. FMD, EC
13. Swine Vesicular Disease (SVD), EC
14. SVD, Italy
15. Newcastle disease (ND), EC
16. ND - Austria
17. ND - Belgium
18. ND - France
19. ND - Ireland
20. ND - Italy
21. ND - Netherlands
22. ND - Portugal
23. ND - Sweden
24. ND - United Kingdom
25. Avian Influenza (AI), EC
26. Avian Influenza - Italy

The geographical areas shown with a color on the maps are the administrative units used for the purpose of animal disease notification. The provisions for disease notification are given in Council Directive 89/894/EC.

The total number of outbreaks of African Swine Fever, Classical Swine Fever, Foot and Mouth disease, Swine Vesicular Disease recorded during 1996 and 1997 is given in Table 1. The date of the last outbreaks of a given disease is indicated for each Member State. In Table 2 similar information has been provided as regards Newcastle disease and Avian Influenza.

2. DISEASE CONTROL MEASURES

The legislation adopted within the area of Animal Health covers basically the compulsory notifiable diffusible epizootic diseases (O.I.E. list 'A' diseases) and diseases which are subject to National control/eradication programmes. The notifiable diffusible diseases of importance for cattle and pig production include: foot and mouth disease, swine vesicular disease, African swine fever and classical swine fever. For poultry the diseases are Newcastle disease and Avian influenza.

a) Control and eradication of animal diseases subject to Community eradication measures

The measures adopted to control and eradicate diseases of livestock and poultry as laid down in Council Directives are based on the strategy of stamping-out infected herds and flocks and controlling the movement of live animals, meat, products originating from susceptible animals, vehicles and other substances liable to transmit the disease causing agent. To ensure such actions in the event of an outbreak, Member States have obligations:

- to arrange for an investigation to confirm or rule out the presence of disease when animals are suspected of being infected,
- to place holdings/flocks under surveillance and prohibit movements to and from holdings/flocks during the surveillance period, when disease is suspected,
- to apply stamping-out when disease has been confirmed,
- to perform a thorough epizootiological inquiry when disease is suspected and confirmed;
- to establish protection zones and surveillance zones around infected holdings/flocks.

In addition to the obligations listed above, the legislation on the control of diseases include requirements for:

- designation of national laboratories and, for certain diseases, a Community reference laboratory,
- a contingency plan. Each Member States shall present a contingency plan for approval by the Commission. The plans must contain provisions to supply the necessary equipment, facilities and expert staff to deal with an epizootic of a reasonable size.
- the submission to the Commission of an emergency vaccination plan should a Member State wish to make use of vaccination due to an epidemic, which cannot be controlled by stamping-out and movement restrictions,
- the submission by Member States of a written plan of the measures to be taken to eradicate Classical Swine Fever if the disease occurs in a population of European wild boar.

The basic legislation relevant for disease eradication include:

- Council directive 85/511/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of foot and mouth disease
- Council directive 92/119/EEC introducing general Community measures for the control of certain animal diseases and specific measures relating to swine vesicular disease
- Council directive 80/217/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of classical swine fever
- Commission decision 97/45/EC approving the programme for the eradication and surveillance of African swine fever for the year 1997 presented by Italy and fixing the level of the Community's financial contribution
- Council directive 92/66/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of Newcastle disease
- Council directive 92/40/EEC introducing Community measures for the control of avian influenza

The special decisions adopted in 1997 by the European Commission in relation to regionalisation are:

- Commission decision 97/116/EC concerning certain protection measures relating to classical swine fever in Germany and repealing Decision 95/296/EC
- Commission decision 97/196/EC amending Decision 97/116/EC concerning certain protection measures relating to classical swine fever in Germany
- Commission decision 97/398/EC repealing Decision 97/116/EC concerning certain protection measures relating to classical swine fever in Germany
- Commission decision 97/122/EC concerning certain protection measures relating to classical swine fever in the Netherlands
- Commission decision 97/216/EC concerning protection measures relating to classical swine fever in the Netherlands and repealing Decision 97/122/EC

- Commission decision 97/285/EC concerning certain protection measures relating to classical swine fever in Spain
- Commission decision 97/446/EC amending Decision 97/285/EC concerning certain protection measures relating to classical swine fever in Spain

Outbreaks in 1997 of Swine Vesicular disease, African Swine Fever, Newcastle disease and Avian Influenza have been controlled by the measures adopted in the basic legislation without the need for introducing special EC protection measures.

b) National control/eradication programmes

In addition to the harmonised control measures adopted for diseases such as foot and mouth disease, classical swine fever and Newcastle disease, the legislation does foresee the implementation of tailor-made surveillance and control programmes for a number of diseases.

c) Competence for control measures

The responsibility for the implementation of control measures rests with the Member States. In the case of outbreaks near a frontier between Member States, the Commission may assist in the coordination of the eradication measures executed by the Member State(s) concerned.

The situation within the Community as regards diseases subject to notification and emergency measures is normally reviewed once a month by the Standing Veterinary Committee. The Commission may ask the Committee, which consists of representatives of the national veterinary services of Member States chaired by the Commission, to give its opinion on proposals for extra disease protection measures, if the Commission considers that the measures taken by the national authorities are not adequate. When such protection measures (safeguard measures) are introduced the principle of regionalisation is applied.

d) Regionalisation

Regionalisation is the application of measures to control and eliminate animal disease from an infected area. It replaces the old policy of applying measures at the borders of the affected Member State, a policy which is not compatible with the Single Market or modern approaches to disease control.

To facilitate a decision to regionalise part of a Member State, as distinct from a decision to block an entire Member State, a number of conditions should be met. These include:

- A detailed epidemiological inquiry must have been carried out which has resulted in sufficient information to enable the geographic limits of the region to be clearly defined.

- Restrictions on movements out of the Region must apply to all other areas.
- Eradication measures must be such as to allow the disease to be eradicated in a limited period.
- A single crisis unit with all the necessary powers must be in charge of the eradication campaign.

The use of regionalisation in relation to disease control and trade have been demonstrated to be beneficial both for Member States affected by a disease and those unaffected. Trade barriers have been limited to areas where specific defined disease control and preventive measures have been enforced.

e) Financial support and compensation

The Council, by Decision 90/424/EEC established a fund for veterinary expenditure. In accordance with the provisions of this decision Member States can obtain a financial contribution from the Community towards the eradication of epizootic diseases. The level of compensation is normally up to 50% of Member States' costs, which relate to slaughter of animals, cleaning and disinfection and destruction of contaminated materials.

Within the framework of the same Decision financial contribution can be made available to cover expenditure on national disease programmes, operation of disease reference laboratories and strengthening veterinary infrastructures.